

autocratic system, or than international brotherhood, the war led to the split of the party, and to decades of recrimination. As Kruse shows, all of these recriminations are foreshadowed in the discourse of 1915; indeed, Kruse's narrative ends in 1915. All in all, it is a tragic story, and Kruse tells it with fervour. Kruse's desire to demythologize one of the great Social Democratic myths must have provided some of the succour to sustain him in his arduous research. Kruse's own motivations also make the book a bit of an oddity. Given the end of the cold war, and the decreasing role of the Social Democratic past in the construction of a present Social Democratic identity, there is no longer as strong an interest in the history of particular parties. Yet, as this superb work demonstrates, there is still much that can be learnt from such studies.

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*Alltag und Arbeitskampf im Hamburger Hafen. Sozialgeschichte der Hamburger Hafenarbeiter 1914–1933.* By Klaus Weinhauer. 'Sammlung Schöningh zur Geschichte und Gesellschaft'. Paderborn, Munich, Vienna and Zurich: Ferdinand Schöningh. 1994. 420 pp. DM 78.

During the past two decades the occupational study has formed the cornerstone of German labour history, though such studies have tended to focus primily on the *Kaiserreich*, for example, Michael Grüttner's excellent *Arbeitswelt an der Wasserkante* (Göttingen, 1984). Weinhauer's book is a welcome attempt to extend similar perspectives 'from below' to the Weimar Republic, but it also serves as a *de facto* sequel to Grüttner's work. Hence, Weinhauer too is concerned with the interrelationship between everyday experiences, trade union organization and industrial conflict, whilst his principal theme is his attempt to explain the dockers' much reduced propensity to strike, including their failure to secure a single outright victory, after 1914.

Weinhauer's central contention is that the dockers' ability and willingness to strike was affected by changes in working conditions and the labour market. For example, since 1906 dock labour had been divided into three categories: permanent, irregular and casual, with the latter two being noted for both their strike proneness and their relatively low productivity. Therefore, from 1925 the employers sought deliberately to increase the proportion of permanently employed dockers, to reduce the job mobility of the irregular workers, and to marginalize the role of the casual labourers. Moreover, the health insurance system fractured the homogeneity of the irregular workforce. Such cleavages, in Weinhauer's opinion, helped determine the dockers' attitudes both to organization and conflict. Hence, whereas the wharfmen, the majority of whom were permanently employed, favoured the long-term strategies of the Free Trade Unions, the overwhelmingly 'irregular' stevedores were inclined to the short-termism of the 'syndicalist' and Communist unions, as well as being prone to spontaneous disputes.

With the weakening of the dockers' ability to forge collective solidarities, the prospects for successful port-wide strikes were seriously undermined, as is evidenced by recurrent defeats after 1923. And yet the Free Unions could have opposed the employers more effectively, Weinhauer maintains, if only they had adopted a strategy of small-scale, branch-specific strikes. After all, the stevedores were able to secure partial victories in successive spontaneous strikes up until October 1928, the irony being that Free Union officials usually negotiated the deals. But by the end of 1930 even this option

was no longer feasible, on account of rising unemployment, reductions in wages and tighter employer control of the labour market. Indeed, by 1932 the dockers' room for manoeuvre was reduced to the level of the individual hiring halls. In this respect, the Communists' failure to mobilize the workforce following Hitler's appointment as Chancellor was not simply the consequence of immediate circumstances, but also of changes in the dockers' strike behaviour over the course of more than a decade.

This is an extremely well written and stimulating book, in which Weinbauer is able to demonstrate that the creation of a more stable and secure dock labour force simultaneously undermined the potentialities for port-wide collective solidarities. In this respect, it would be more accurate to talk about the fragmentation of the dock labour force. Whether these findings have broader applicability or not is open to question, but Weinbauer's book is certainly essential reading for all those interested in the fate of German labour during the Weimar Republic.

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*The Rise of the Nazis.* By Conan Fischer. Manchester: Manchester University Press. 1995. 194 pp. £8.99.

Teachers of inter-war German history who relied on English language books would have had every right to feel frustrated in recent years. A great deal of the most interesting new findings and approaches from Germany in the last decade remained untranslated and untapped. Now Conan Fischer, who in his own work has challenged several orthodoxies, has taken the opportunity of presenting in text book form some of his own views, backed up by the substantial research which has emerged in recent years.

One of the main strengths of Conan Fischer's book on the rise of the Nazis is its organization. Rather than writing another chronological survey, Fischer provides a brief overview of the Weimar era and then focuses in five equally concise chapters on what he regards as crucial aspects in explaining the rise of Nazism.

In a chapter about the ideological basis of Nazism, Fischer establishes that the Nazis were able to attract all groups in German society and hence that it 'appears necessary to identify and explore underlying unifying principles' (p. 31). The *völkisch* dimension of Nazi ideology and the concept of *Volksgemeinschaft*, which gained a powerful momentum due to the experience of a 'common cause' during the First World War and in the late 1920s became identical with Nazism, stands at the heart of Fischer's analysis. Unlike some historians who brush aside several aspects of Nazism simply as opportunistic, Fischer takes the Nazis' use of 'socialism' very seriously, albeit only when linked to the adjective 'national': 'It was the socialism of a thwarted ruling people (*Herrenvolk*) rather than that of the chronically underprivileged . . . seeking justice and equal rights . . . This form of socialism could appeal across class barriers with far greater ease than could Marxist socialism, which posed uncomfortable dilemmas for middle-class citizens' (p. 44).

In the next two chapters Fischer moves on to give informative summaries of the complexities of National Socialist policy and the effect of propaganda, and discusses the Nazi organization and movement and the reasons for their spectacular successes. The last two chapters are about the formation of the Nazis' middle-class and working-class constituencies. Fischer constantly asks the right questions and gives convincing